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18 August 1966

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

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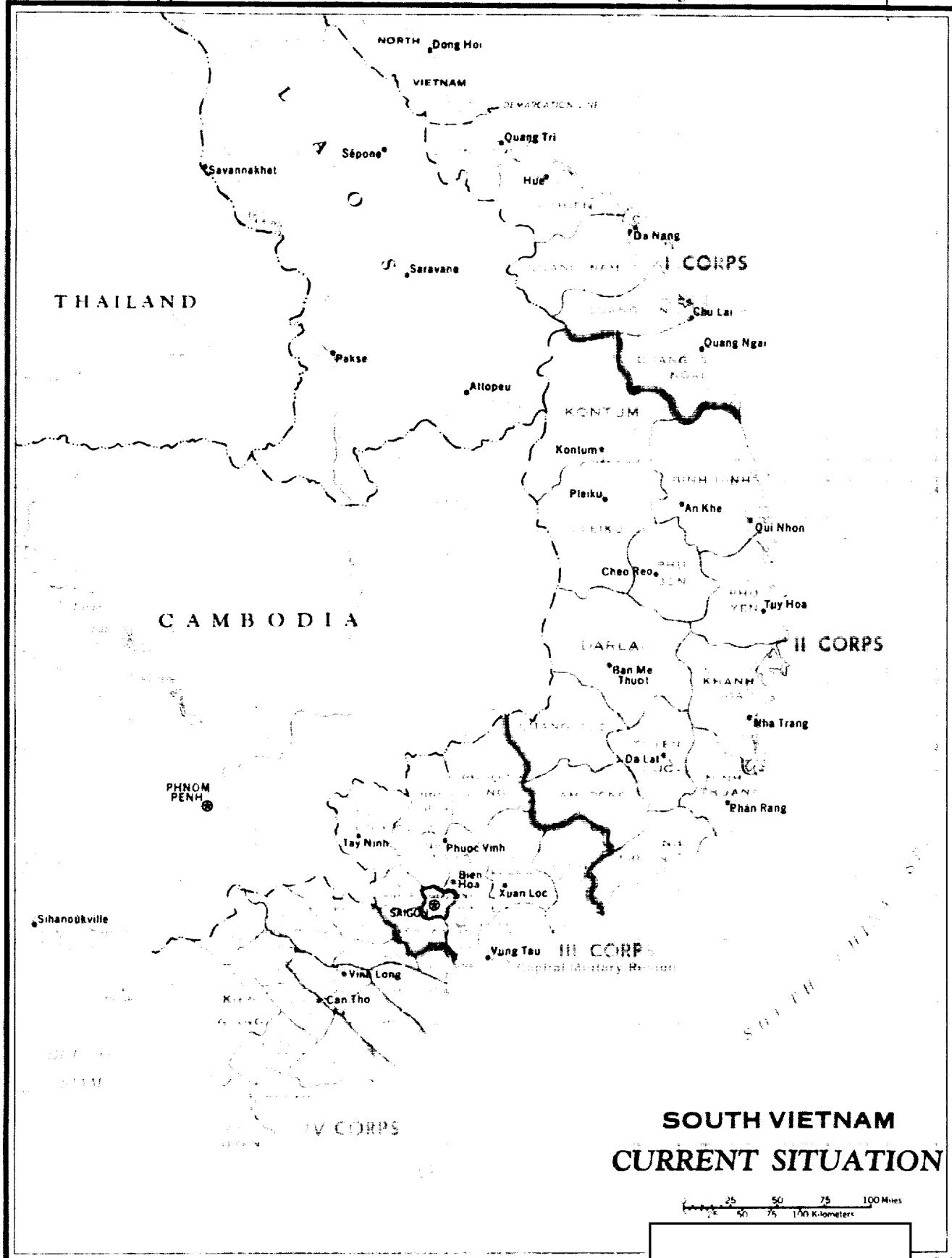
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*Vietnam: (Information as of 4:30 AM EDT)

Political Developments in South Vietnam: Both the Vietnamese Communists and the Buddhists have recently reiterated their opposition to elections administered by the present Saigon government.

The Viet Cong "Liberation Front," in a broadcast on 15 August, declared that opposition to the elections on the part of religious and political organizations, and particularly among workers in Saigon, had been increasing since early August. A commentary from Hanoi the same day claimed that the "people" would boycott the September election, which it labeled a "cloak" for "US neocolonialist policy" in South Vietnam.

The latest communique from the Buddhist Institute in Saigon dodges the question of an official Buddhist boycott, while continuing to adopt a negative position. A communique issued by the acting chairman of the Institute after an Institute council meeting on 14 August, stressed a policy of "nonco-operation" with electoral processes organized by the present government and the right of citizens "not to vote." The communique repeated a call for the formation of a transitional government.

The Military Situation in South Vietnam: An unusual flurry of Viet Cong activity in the form of small harassing actions, ambushes, and terrorism has been reported over the past two days.

At least one effective ambush and five mortar and small arms probes were conducted by the Viet Cong in the period 16-17 August against South Vietnamese, US, and other Free World military targets

in scattered areas of the country. Yesterday, Viet Cong terrorists exploded a bomb at a fairground in Hue. These actions together resulted in some 25 to 30 allied soldiers ~~and~~ killed, a similar number of Vietnamese civilians, and scores wounded. Viet Cong losses in all but one of the attacks were undetermined.

Military Developments in North Vietnam: Preliminary assessment of the most recent strike on the Uong Bi thermal power plant indicates that it may be out of commission for at least a year.

As one of the largest plants in North Vietnam's power grid, Uong Bi has supplied about 20 to 25 percent of the electricity required in both Hanoi and Haiphong.

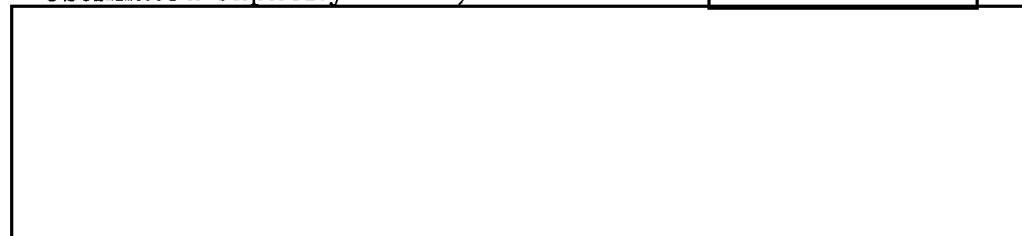


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The destruction of the Uong Bi plant represents a loss of almost 13 percent of North Vietnam's total estimated capacity of 187,000 kilowatts.

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USSR: Premier Kosygin is reportedly under doctor's orders to take a complete and extended rest.

Soviet officials in Moscow, explaining Kosygin's failure to meet important foreign visitors, have said that he will be on leave for six weeks and that Brezhnev has given instructions that Kosygin is not to be disturbed during that time. Kosygin has not appeared in public in Moscow since 10 August and is probably now at a vacation place.

Although Kosygin's re-election to the premiership earlier this month gave the lie to rumors that he would be forced to resign for reasons of health, he has been described as looking especially tired recently. However, though at 62 he is not known to have a chronic health problem, he has lately had a taxing schedule. [redacted]

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Congo (Kinshasa): [The mutinous Katangan troops in Kisangani apparently intend to leave for Katanga.]

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[If the Katangans do go south, they will face a long journey over poor roads and will be subject to harassment by government forces. The only unit capable of meeting them head-on, however, is the South African mercenary force, which is now strung out between Bukavu and Albertville. If the Katangans are not stopped, they will broaden the area being distracted and demoralized by the mutiny, with consequent hampering of the government's campaign against the rebellion and further weakening of its hold in the eastern Congo.]

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NOTES

USSR: The Soviet Union apparently has developed a meteorological satellite which enables it to meet the requirements of the 1962 US-USSR agreement to exchange satellite weather data. Moscow has announced that Cosmos 122, launched on 25 June, carries meteorological instruments. Cosmos 122 is the fifth satellite launched by the USSR in what has appeared to be a meteorological program.

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National Aeronautics and Space Administration

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